

Spotlight on Congress

SALT II

Stumbling Block

By REP. DAN QUAYLE (R.-Ind.)

Although the Senate Intelligence Committee issued a scaled-down public report which raised few questions about the United States' ability to monitor Soviet compliance with the SALT II treaty, it has become apparent that the report inflated the "good news" and ignored the "bad news."

A recent newspaper column by nationally known columnists Evans and Novak revealed that a more voluminous secret report has been produced by the committee, which is restricted only to the 100 senators themselves, and raises serious questions about verification. In fact, the columnists reported that "the secret code-word report states unequivocally that the SALT II protocol (lasting to Dec. 31, 1981) cannot be verified."

There obviously are delicate security matters involved in America's intelligence monitoring capabilities, but the American public is entitled to a frank and candid appraisal which truthfully reflects our ability to monitor Soviet compliance with the treaty.

Significantly, Sen. Barry Goldwater [R.-Ariz.], vice chairman of the Senate Intelligence Committee, on Nov. 8, 1979, reversed his earlier judgment that the treaty was adequately verifiable. In a statement on the Senate floor, Sen. Goldwater said he had "doubts now of a sufficient nature to cause me to say

that I do not feel that we can depend on the verification capabilities of this country...."

The senator has expressed concern that certain new intelligence equipment, which was expected to replace monitoring sites lost in Iran, has not been put in place and there is reason to believe it will not be ready in the future.

It is apparent that the SALT II treaty imposes substantial imbalances on the United States. These imbalances range from permitting the Russians to have 308 heavy missiles while we have none; exclusion of the Soviet Backfire bomber from the treaty's limits but counting our aging B-52's; and severe limitation on cruise missile ranges.

In the light of these imbalances, it is imperative that the United States have the capability to determine whether or not the Soviets are cheating. The public report of the Senate Intelligence Committee does little to reassure us on this point—but the revelations of the Evans-Novak column concerning conclusions of the top-secret report along with the actions of Sen. Goldwater should raise a "red flag" that should be heeded.